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ABSTRACT

In response to a survey designed to determine the issues of concern existing between community college presidents and boards of trustees, 137 presidents identified and ranked the importance of ten major areas of need: (1) both parties need to understand where the line is drawn between their respective responsibilities; (2) trustees need to understand the community college's role, unique mission, philosophy, and curriculum; (3) trustees need a code of ethics to define what trustee actions are "out of bounds" and what are constructive; (4) both parties need to understand finance, funding, and budgeting; (5) both parties need to understand collective bargaining and tenure; (6) both parties need to understand state and federal encroachment and red tape; (7) new trustees need a structured orientation program to prepare them for the trustee role; (8) trustees need to understand how to develop policy, long range plans, and goals; (9) trustees must understand their legal responsibilities and the legal structures of their states; and (10) trustees must be supportive of the college and of the administration. In order to determine if the concerns of trustees paralleled those of the presidents, a group of selected trustees rated the ten identified needs. Results indicated president-trustee concurrence on the first five needs. (DC)

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MAJOR PRONOUNCEMENT

COMMON CONCERNS AMONG COMMUNITY COLLEGE PRESIDENTS AND TRUSTEES

JC 760 399

ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE TRUSTEES

AN
ACCT
MAJOR PRONOUNCEMENT:

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AN
ACCT
MAJOR PRONOUNCEMENT:
COMMON CONCERNS AMONG COMMUNITY COLLEGE PRESIDENTS AND TRUSTEES

A valuable tool for in-service education
for both trustees and presidents.

by

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George Washington University
Washington, D.C.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Acknowledgements	i
Comments by Dr. M.C. King and Dr. C. R. Jasiek	ii
"Common Concerns Among Community College Presidents and Trustees"	1
Sample of Letter and Questionnaire	11
Charts	13

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A special word of appreciation is extended to the many individuals who helped make this monograph possible. Bill Meardy, Executive Director, encouraged me, shared my enthusiasm, and added his penciled comments to the copy. Victoria Dziuba, Director of Trustee Services, started the project by sending out the initial survey. Jeanne Shoemaker used her genius at the typewriter, not once but several times. Dr. King and Mr. Jasiek very graciously contributed their comments. But most of all I owe a real debt of gratitude to all the presidents and trustees who filled out questionnaires and wrote letters.

Fontelle Gilbert

A COMMENT BY MAXWELL C. KING....

The ACCT study on the Common Concerns Among Community College Presidents and Trustees is both interesting and thorough and should be of extreme value to the college president and the trustee. As the study points out, the president and the trustee share many areas of common concern, and the paramount goal of both is to serve better the college community and the students.

The idea of obtaining views from both groups is an excellent one. Certainly there will always be differences of opinions, but it is only through such a comprehensive study that these differences can be pointed out in positive and concrete terms. The information contained in this study will enable the president and the trustee to better understand each other, respect the role of each individual, and also enable the president and the trustee to coordinate their mutual goals of making the college the most efficient institution possible in serving the total educational needs of the community.

I believe this will be an excellent service to community college trustees and presidents.

Dr. King is the President of Brevard Community College, Cocoa, Florida, and Chairman of the Presidents Academy, American Association of Community and Junior Colleges, Washington, D.C.

A COMMENT BY C.R. JASIEK....

Govern - Administer - these two words are mutually exclusive in practice, but if one were to look for differences in the dictionary he would find they are almost synonymous. In this fact lies the problem. Governance, which includes policy-making, is completely the province of the Board of Trustees and thereby establishes the relationship between the Board and the Administration. As the title indicates, the latter is to administer the policies established by the governing unit. The president may help by providing resource for formulating policy, at the request of the Board, but under no circumstances can he legally initiate policy and then try to administer it. The obligation of the Board, on the other hand, is to understand the total workings of the educational unit and, as stated before, set policy for it. Under no circumstances should the Board administer policies within that same unit.

It is my belief that the Board and the Administration must have a clear and somewhat experienced understanding of those two important words, and not succumb to the temptation of dos-a-dosing across that line of understanding. I think administrators can expect greater accountability to Boards and Boards, in turn, to the educational and community families because of the shrinking resources utilized to support education across the land. This is only part of the social evolution and as the demands of all segments of society become more expansive there will be greater scrutiny of dollars expended in all areas of social activity. Perhaps this is unpalatable, but it is most necessary for the survival of quality education for all.

Dr. Jasiek is the Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Illinois Valley Community College, Oglesby, Illinois, and President of the Illinois Community College Trustee Association.

COMMON CONCERNS AMONG COMMUNITY COLLEGE PRESIDENTS AND TRUSTEES

Community college presidents are sending a message asking for help. ACCT urges you, the trustee to have a heart-to-heart talk with your president. Know what your administrator needs, fears and wants. Then as a board, get busy; do what you can to set things right.

FROM THE PRESIDENTS

At the Association of Community College Trustees, we have been privileged to read 137 letters from community college presidents. The presidents were responding to ACCT's survey on the basic question of "What issues do you see existing between presidents and boards of trustees that are causing both you and other presidents concern?"

The objective was to find areas of concern that could be addressed by ACCT as it seeks to better serve the needs of trustees and presidents of this country's community colleges. Most of the responding presidents wrote comprehensive, definitive answers; a kind of pouring out of felt concerns and tensions in the area of governance.

If a picture were painted of the community college president today, it would be painted with muted colors. The sunshine of a few years ago is fading.

The letters were read and reread and the needs expressed were tabulated. Ten major areas of concern or need emerged along with some of a lesser nature.

Here the concerns are listed, in the order in which they were most frequently discussed.

1. There is a need to understand where the line is drawn between the president's and board's responsibilities.

2. The trustees need to understand the community colleges role, unique mission, philosophy and curriculum.

3. There is a need to develop a code of ethics to help define what trustee actions are "out of bounds" and what are constructive.

4. There is a need to understand finance, funding and budgeting.

5. There is a need to understand the entire area of collective bargaining and tenure.

6. There is a need to understand both State and Federal government encroachment and red tape.

7. There is a need for some structured orientation to help the individual trustee prepare for the trustee role.

8. The trustee needs to understand how to develop policy, long range plans and goals.

9. There is a need for the trustees to understand their legal responsibilities and the legal structures of their state.

10. The trustee needs to be supportive of the college and of the administration.

So that you too may feel you have been in conversation with these presidents, here are some representative statements from their letters on each of the ten topics.

1. There is a need to understand where the line is drawn between the presidents and the boards responsibilities:

   - "Trustees individually, and as a board, need to know how they can be a strong and effective board at the policy level without getting involved in college management decisions, thus creating the frictions and problems that are so often a concern."

   - "The prime issue in my institution is the misunderstood role of boards of trustees wherein they wish to be the operators of the institution rather than the policy-setting body."

   - "I have a very good board but there is always someone who does not understand the trustee role. Most issues relate to the fine line which exists between policy, which is the proper prerogative of the board, and administration, which is the responsibility of the chief executive and his staff."

   - "If trustees are to avoid the danger of obscuring the big picture with too much involvement in day-to-day operations, the techniques of 'Management by objectives and management by exception' should be stressed."

   - "Trustees should not become involved in the day-to-day operations of the college. A healthy working relationship is needed; one that involves mutual trust and respect."

2. The trustees need to understand the community colleges role, unique mission, philosophy and curriculum:

   - "The community college concept needs to be kept before the board and staff. As most of them came out of the four-year academic tradition, it is very difficult for them to honestly implement the community college philosophy."

   - "Trustees must become more sensitive in understanding that in carrying out their comprehensive educational mission, community colleges offer liberal arts, transfer programs, career programs, general education programs, continuing education and community service programs. Not just one or some of these, but <u>all</u> of them."

- "Needed: A better understanding of the community college philosophy in terms of open access admission. Community colleges should not become selective or traditional."

- "Changes in community college student populations, such as older age average, more part-time students, more occupationally oriented students, etc., should elicit new strategy for the educational delivery systems."

- "I would like to see trustees become more imbued with the community college view."

3. There is a need to develop a code of ethics to help define what actions are "out of bounds" and what are constructive:

   - "A real problem is the trustee who insists on speaking for the Board in public, who gives 'board views' to faculty, administrators and the public. They should learn that when not seated at the board table they are private citizens who represent only themselves."

   - "I was horrified when one trustee on the board actually boasted of 'hot lines' to the campus."

   - "The age old problem of 'how do trustees listen to individual employees without compromising their objectivity as a board member' continues to raise its ugly head."

   - "There needs to be a way to develop a trustees self concept. This role does not call for petty politics, meddling, or pretention. It calls for statesman-like behavior."

   - "Though trustees may have strong feelings of a personal or professional mission, they must not allow those feelings to in any way influence them to make decisions on any other basis than the best interests of the college. Personal or vested interests have no place on the board."

4. There is a need to understand finance, funding and budgeting:

   - "There is a need to develop or present more information on understanding budget format, reading financial statements, etc."

   - "More in-depth understanding of higher education financing, particularly cost benefit relationships, would facilitate decision-making by the boards."

   - "Trustees need more knowledge of all sources of funding, not only from the various levels of government, but also from the private sector as well."

   - "Our trustees ought to be more knowledgeable in the area of budget development and the allocation of fiscal resources."

- "A discussion underlining the fiscal commitments of the government and review sources of funding as well as model vehicles for enhancing the local districts ability to obtain its fair share."

5. There is a need to understand the entire area of collective bargaining and tenure:

   - "Trustees and presidents need to face together the problems inherent in collective bargaining and that both groups emphasize participation of all staff in deliberations and in governance."

   - "Trustees must quickly learn how to function effectively in the area of collective bargaining. The atmosphere of collegiality and professionalism is undergoing dramatic changes. Trustees must become more open and sensitive while also becoming more businesslike and firm, and develop the wisdom to know when each is appropriate."

   - "We need to know more about collective bargaining, especially in regard to what board members may do to help avoid the prospect of collective bargaining in advance of the faculty and/or staff actually being organized."

   - "The trend toward collective bargaining will require the trustees and presidents to work closely as the management team. Management's position on employee demands must be uniform in order to bargain effectively."

   - "Boards of trustees need to learn how to set the limits on issues for negotiation purposes without becoming personally involved in negotiations."

6. The trustee needs to understand both State and Federal government encroachment and red tape.

   - "One of the major issues today is government programs, the necessary red tape for the same, their uncertainty, the encroachment of government upon both hiring and maintaining faculty and this whole syndrome of issues."

   - "Trustees need to know how to ban together in order to influence legislation, for the purpose of resisting centralized control."

   - "Trustees should be more knowledgeable in the areas of increased governmental encroachment, and how to deal more effectively with encroachment."

   - "State control threatens the existance of a viable or effective board."

- "The primary concern I would like to identify is in the area of non-productive, effort consuming Federal agency bureaucracy which is effecting the internal functions of institutions of higher education. Federal agency influence (HEW - Department of Labor) is an ever increasing factor."

7. The need exists for some structured orientation to help the individual trustee prepare for the trustee role:

   - "Since trustees change there is a continuous need for orientation for the role of trustee and for knowledge about the functions of a community college."

   - "Some kind of board instructional program would be worthwhile so trustees would understand their role as policy developers, planners, fund raisers, and communicators."

   - "I would encourage ACCT to continue its progress in providing information to our trustees through meetings, publications, etc., that will help to make our trustees knowledgeable of the problems in higher education today."

   - "I feel college trustees need to be more knowledgeable of the inner operating functions for an educational institution. I believe if there were opportunities to discuss governance methodologies at the conferences it would be a great help."

   - "The emphasis of our training should be mutual respect between board and president. The working relationship would be enhanced if each knew more about the area in which the other claimed expertise."

   - "First of all, I feel that well-oriented, dedicated trustees are the real cornerstone of the community college system. I feel that the first and most important characteristic evidenced by a good trustee should be a sincere dedication to the idea of being a trustee. All educational efforts follow from the trustee's willingness to learn to serve his constituency.

   - "As to trustee education--trustees should be aware of what is happening in higher education nationwide. We could use area workshops to study the real problems of state support, tuition, etc. These questions are already being answered by ACCT; for example your excellent conferences.

8. The trustee needs to understand how to develop policy, long range plans and goals:

   - "When planning I feel periodic reinforcement and incentive to encourage bold actions that allow for adaptation during cycles

of marginal growth is the most important issue facing trustees in these times. Granted, one must be realistic in planning, but to unknowingly commit an institution to status quo methodologies and/or ideologies is to disenfranchise an education from the mainstream of national thought."

- "Boards could become more goal and policy oriented, keeping up with issues which relate to college goals."

- "Board members should relate individual issues to the overall master plan for institutional development--too often there is a piecemeal policy."

- "Involvement of faculty, staff and other employees in the decision process is a desirable procedure and is not a threat to the policy making responsibilities of the board."

- "There should be more long range planning. There is too great a tendency to operate from year to year."

9. There is a need for trustees to understand their legal responsibilities and the legal structures of their state:

- "Trustees should understand the legal structures which provide for the organization and operation of the institution."

- "Boards need to understand such things as the natural affinity of the governing body to liability responsibility, 'Sunshine' meeting laws, pressures, and regulations from State and Federal coordinating agencies."

- "There are legal-rights/obligations/and restrictions upon board members that they need to understand."

- "In view of a board's ultimate responsibility for institutional governance, it is important that trustees be knowledgeable in the concept of affirmative action and the impact and implications it has on college operation."

- "Is it necessary to insure all the employees of the college?"

10. There is a need for the trustees to be supportive of the college and the administrator.

- "Trustees should see themselves not as 'Keepers of the Keys' -- but adopt the image of doing the most for student, faculty and community."

- "Trustees must constantly restate and demonstrate that they are the friends of the college. The advocacy for and support of the college by the trustees must be unquestionable and above reproach."

- "Good institutional morale is influenced more by the attitude of trustees and their support than by the necessary decisions they must make."

- "The administration needs solid board support which can come only from a board which is united in purpose."

- "Trustees must serve as trustees of all campuses, staff and students under their jurisdiction and not show favoritism to special groups. They must promote the college with the legislature and the public."

The difficulties now present in the role of president, are apparent in almost every answer. Bur there is another, more basic, revelation. Presidents want strong, informed, hardworking, educated trustees. The business of administering a community college is an awesome job today. It cannot be done by one person. The undertaking calls for team effort; the president knows this.

You may be interested in the lesser areas of need that were enunciated in the letters. Here briefly are five other areas of concern:

Communication:

- "....the use/abuse of media by individual board members."

- "If the president keeps the trustees fully informed including the sharing of his problems, they can be effective and supportive."

- "In a state system of community colleges the trustees of each institution should be aware of how to convey achievements of the institution, as well as concerns and problems, to the state authorities."

- "Channels of communication should be kept open, of course--but communication should be via the channels only."

Evaluation:

- "Boards and administrators must develop more effective procedures for evaluating the effectiveness of the elements of the institution."

- "Trustees could be more knowledgeable in the area of evaluation of administrators and faculty."

- "Although for some trustees, involvement in day-to-day operations is quite likely a matter of choice, the majority I think would welcome assistance in looking at the big picture provided they feel confident of the methods of evaluating achievement."

- "A big question is <u>how</u> <u>to</u> evaluate the president."

Faculty:

- "Trustees should be more knowledgeable about the work load of faculty, not only as related to class size, but also in community and committee commitment."

- "Trustees should make an objective study of teaching loads of their faculty members in various programs and courses."

- "Teaching at the higher level makes unique demands on time and energy. The trustee would do well to understand that the conscientious teacher has an endless task."

Human and Public Relations:

- "We need information on public relations, internal and external.

- "Honest differences of opinion will exist, but should not be taken personally."

- "Boards and presidents must have complete integrity and faith in each other and be willing to speak frankly regarding their relationship."

- "We need to know how to deal with some very delicate personnel and other problems in a state where all governmental activity must be conducted in the 'sunshine'."

Higher Education:

- "Trustees must be kept up-to-date on the trends, not only in curriculum, but also in enrollment in all areas of higher education."

- "The area of educational technology and innovative programming, for higher education, have literally exploded. Trustees need more knowledge in this area so they can separate the useful from the poor."

- "Trustees should be more knowledgeable about the organization of higher education within the state and the respective place that community colleges have within that organization."

- "More knowledge is needed about current developments in higher education, particularly matters relating to finance, curriculum and governance."

FROM THE TRUSTEES

The Association of Community College Trustees is dedicated to the strengthening of board-president relationships. In order to find out how trustees felt about the "top ten" concerns, we formed them into a questionnaire and mailed them to a group of Vice-Chairmen of boards of trustees. (See following page.)

Because of the basic difference in style and content of the two survey questionnaires, no substantial comparisons are drawn. But the responses add a working knowledge of how both presidents and trustees feel about some of the main issues.

The top five concerns existing between boards and presidents.

	Presidents	Trustees
First	President/Board Roles	President/Board Roles
Second	Community College philosophy, role and mission.	Community College philosophy, role and mission.
Third	Define what is ethical and what is political or meddling.	Policy development and long range planning.
Fourth	Finance, funding and budgeting.	Finance, funding and budgeting.
Fifth	Collective bargaining	Collective bargaining

For a picture of the importance given to each of the top ten concerns see the graphs on the following two pages. You might note that if we put together the question of legal concerns (No. 9) and those concerning the State and Federal Government (No. 6) this would be the most important issue for both Trustees and Presidents.

Community colleges have just gone through a golden period of growth, ample funds, and popularity. It is easy to be an administrator when "all is well" with your world. Today life as a college administrator has lost some of its sheen. This is felt in the president's letters. The world of the administrator is frought with adversary relationships and problems coming from areas outside the presidents control. For example there are more than 440 national educational programs administered by seventeen Federal agencies*; budget cuts and adjustments are made at the state capital; students and teachers are both working for their rights, twenty-four states now have collective bargaining, and others are in the process.

There is a tendency (probably universal) to find someone to blame during times of strain. (Some colleges may even want to dismiss presidents for problems that are not individual but national or even international in scope.) The presidents letters were relatively free of rancor or fault finding; but there seemed to be a great yearning for a relationship of trust and shared responsibility.

Several presidents said they need, and wanted, strong, well educated (in trusteeship), informed trustees. They believe this to be the real hope of the community colleges.

These 137 presidents seemed to be almost crying out for help; not in the day-to-day operation of the college, for this is their area of expertise; but in the sometimes larger-than-life issues that effect the college of today.

*Washington Post, March 22, 1976
Richard D. Lamm, p. A19

Not all these concerns belong to every governance/management team. Some boards may find, to their pleasure, that they are already working creatively in each of these areas. But for those who recognize the need to work on one or more of these concerns, here are some alternative courses of action.

1. Encourage every trustee you know from any community/junior college and technical institute to join ACCT and take advantage of all the educational services that are available.

2. Attend ACCT seminars and conventions. Learn from other trustees.

3. Communicate with your president until you not only hear but feel the administrators concerns. Then you can help.

4. Make yourself known at the State Capital so you can not only be informed but make your opinions known on policy and legislation that effects your institution.

5. Know your college and the community so you can guide your college as it meets community needs.

6. Sponsor and support state workshops and seminars to grapple with the top ten areas of concern outlined here.

7. Sponsor a retreat to work, in-depth, on the all important issue of governance, management and the roles of president and trustee as parts of a governing/management team.

8. Write, call or talk with your congressman about Federal encroachment and red tape and its adverse effects of Higher Education.

9. While you may disagree in private, on all other fronts support your president. Your support is necessary for the healthy survival of the institution.

10. Form a task force to attack the problems of finance looking at both traditional sources and alternative methods.

You the trustee are appreciated and needed by the president. Many letters said "I enjoy a fine working relationship with my board" or "I have a great group of trustees" or "Many trustees are really dedicated". If you can continue your growth toward informed, responsible trusteeship you may well be the salvation of today's community colleges. The presidents need and must have your support. A strong board/president team is a must -- for the students whom you serve.

Association of Community College Trustees
955 L'Enfant Plaza, S.W.,
Suite 1406
Washington, D.C. 20024
202/488/8277

TO: Trustee

FROM: Fontelle Gilbert
Assistant Director of Trustee Services

RE: Questionnaire

DATE: March 2, 1976

You have been especially selected as a respondent to a questionnaire similar to the one we recently sent to community college presidents.

The major areas of concern surfaced as a result of the president's responses. We are interested in knowing if your concerns, as a trustee, parallel those of the presidents. If they do not, we would like to know the areas where your concerns differ.

We hope this exchange of views will strengthen the organization team of boards and presidents and in turn, the effectiveness of ACCT.

We invite you to invest a few minutes now to share your evaluation with ACCT. We are enclosing for your convenience a self-addressed stamped envelope. Thank you for your help.

Association of Community College Trustees
955 L'Enfant Plaza, S.W.,
Suite 1406
Washington, D.C. 20024
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Please read answer categories carefully.

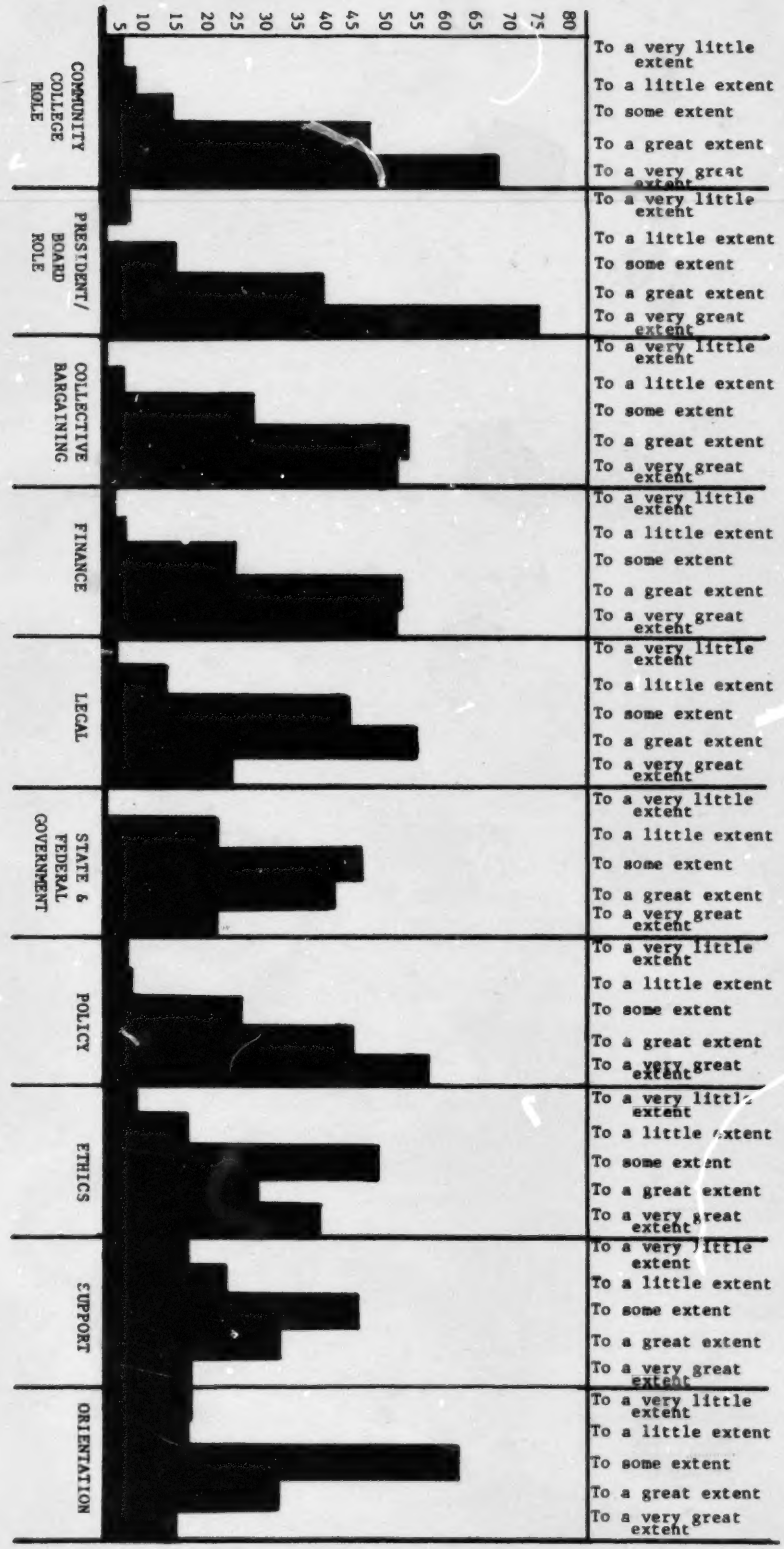
Then answer each question by encircling the number of your choice.

		To a very little extent	To a little extent	To some extent	To a great extent	To a very great extent
1.	To what extent do your trustees need to understand the Community College's role, unique mission, philosophy and curriculum?	1	2	3	4	5
2.	To what extent do your trustees need to understand where the line is drawn between the presidents and boards responsibilities?	1	2	3	4	5
3.	To what extent do your trustees need to understand collective bargaining, tenure and the issue of liability?	1	2	3	4	5
4.	To what extent do your trustees need to understand finance, funding and budgeting?	1	2	3	4	5
5.	To what extent do your trustees need to understand the legal responsibilities and structures of your state or area?	1	2	3	4	5
6.	To what extent do your trustees need to understand State and Federal government encroachment and red tape?	1	2	3	4	5
7.	To what extent do your trustees need to understand how to develop policy, long range plans and goals?	1	2	3	4	5
8.	To what extent do your trustees need to develop a code of ethics to help them define what actions might be considered meddling, "Political" or bias by others?	1	2	3	4	5
9.	To what extent do your trustees need some unique coaching so they may be prepared and supportive participants at their meetings?	1	2	3	4	5
10.	To what extent do your trustees need some additional structured orientation to educate them to the trustee's role?	1	2	3	4	5

11. If we have not included the issue you feel is most important please write your own question.

12. Please pick from the above questions the three you feel are the most critical. Place the number of the question on the line.

The most critical concern _____.
The second most critical concern _____.
The third most critical concern _____.



TRUSTEE RESPONSES

UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
LOS ANGELES
AUG 20 1976
CLEARINGHOUSE FOR
JUNIOR COLLEGES

AREAS OF NEED OR CONCERN

The percent of respondants who thought the question important

Dotted Line - Trustees Solid Line - Presidents